

When They Knew God

By David J. Stewart

Romans 1:16-25, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, **WHEN THEY KNEW GOD**, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen."



Everyone at Some Point in Life Recognizes God

Romans chapter one gives us the "progression" of people who have decided to travel the highway of destruction (to ultimate misery and judgment) in Hell. Surely, God doesn't want anyone to perish. The Bible declares that we are responsible for ourselves—we must decide our own fate! Why would a person reject God? Why would any man or woman despise their Creator? It all begins in Romans one with the easily overlooked little phrase, "...**WHEN THEY KNEW GOD...**" (Romans 1:21). Every man and woman at some point in life "knew God." The Greek word for "knew" here means "to be aware of" or "to perceive." Thus, we have all perceived God's presence at some point in our life. Everyone has had the chance to do what's right and seek after God.

King Josiah in the Old Testament grew up in the worst of sinful conditions with ungodly parents and yet he served the Lord and did what was right. Anyone can do right! ... "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to **ALL** men" (Titus 2:11). God's "grace" is sufficient for ALL our needs. God is fair! "For the **INVISIBLE THINGS** of Him from the creation of the world are **CLEARLY SEEN...**" (Romans 1:20). Wow! The Scriptures teach that **we can indeed see invisible things!** How? "...being understood **BY THE THINGS THAT ARE MADE...**" (Romans 1:20). We read in Psalm 19:1-3 that "The heavens declare the glory (goodness) of God; and the firmament **SHOWETH** His handiwork. Day unto day **UTTERETH** speech, and night unto night **SHOWETH** knowledge. There is **NO SPEECH NOR LANGUAGE, WHERE THEIR VOICE IS NOT HEARD.**" Every star is a sermon!

Just as with music, nature needs no interpreter. The Scriptures plainly teach that God has provided enough light (through the things that are made) for anyone to clearly see the things (which are invisible). "...even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are **WITHOUT EXCUSE**: Because that, **WHEN THEY KNEW GOD**, they glorified (to esteem glorious-honor, magnify) Him not as God, neither were thankful" (Romans

1:20,21). Christ-rejecters are without excuse! Those who will someday die and plunder into hell fire will be without excuse! Anyone can come to the knowledge of the truth if they so desire. We all perceive and become aware of God's presence at some point in our life. We all must decide to go down one of two possible paths: God's or our own.

Most People Turn Away from God, Refusing to Acknowledge Him

Romans chapter one gives us the step-by-step downfall of those who choose the wrong path by deciding they don't need God. "...they did not like to **RETAIN GOD in their knowledge...**" (Romans 1:28). What a sad statement! They simply didn't want God in their life, not even in their mind.

It all begins with being unthankful and not honoring God. The word "honor" means "to value." How can anyone not value and want God? When the Scriptures speak of honoring your parents, it means to value them and treat them as such. Jesus, even while dying on the cross, expressed concern for His mother's well being after He was gone (John 19:26). Do you value (honor) your parents and God? Can you live just as well without Jesus? No, you can't! Many today are arrogant and self-righteous and don't want a Savior. They don't like God and don't want to think about Him! They mistreat God.

They Become Unthankful Towards God

These people, being unthankful and reluctant to honor God Almighty—became vain and foolish. "...but became vain (empty, silly) in their imaginations, and their **FOOLISH HEART WAS DARKENED**. Professing themselves to be wise, **THEY BECAME FOOLS,**" (Romans 1:21,22). So many are foolish today! This lost and wicked world that we are living in today—worships sports and sex; glorifies sin and rebellion; thrives on greed and corruption; practices covetousness and maliciousness; diminishes the sacredness of the family, marriage and God; honors the immoral and heathen; Rejects Christ and has no place or purpose for the Word of God.

God says; "...they are **WITHOUT EXCUSE**" (Romans 1:20); "...Who KNOWING the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but HAVE PLEASURE IN THEM THAT DO THEM" (Romans 1:32). This sounds like TV doesn't it? People have pleasure in watching others commit sin! Adulterers and homosexuals who would never be allowed into your home to commit their evil deeds are welcomed right into your home through the TV set to do the same. No wonder some have called the TV—Hellivision. Is the TV your idol? Don't be too quick to say "no"! Read your Bible lately? How much time do you spend watching the box? Idolatry is anything that means more to you than God.

They Become Fools in Their Sinful Pride

By nature man is full of pride, arrogance and self-righteousness. For those who avoid God, live in sin and "do-their-own-thing"—they must redefine God and His truth to maintain self-respect. So they change, discredit and misquote God's Word. They have a

distorted view of God. “And **CHANGED** the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image...” (Romans 1:23). “Who **CHANGED** the truth of God into a lie...” (Romans 1:25). So they explain away God and His Holy Word with silly thinking and worldly philosophy. “**PROFESSING THEMSELVES TO BE WISE**, they became fools” (Romans 1:22). Are you a fool? Did you travel down the wrong path in life after the time “when you knew God?”

What a statement—“WHEN THEY KNEW GOD!” (Romans 1:21). Some people deny God’s Word. Scriptures say that the “invisible” things of God are “clearly seen.” The rich man in Hell begged Abraham to send Lazarus from the dead to warn his five brothers “lest they also come into this place of torment.” Abraham said, “If they will not hear Moses and the prophets, NEITHER WILL THEY BE PERSUADED, **THOUGH ONE ROSE FROM THE DEAD**” (Luke 16:27-31).

There are No Excuses Not to Get Saved!

No excuses! If you go to Hell, it will be no one’s fault but YOUR OWN. People are great blame-shifters. Adam and Eve both sinned—Adam blamed Eve, Eve blamed the serpent. This is typical of humans, to shift the blame elsewhere. If we cannot shift the blame, then we try to cover our sins as Cain did. “He that **covereth his sins** shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13). Cain killed Able and then pretended he was ignorant concerning Abel’s death. On and on we could go. Everyone wants to shift the blame.

No my friend, you CANNOT blame anyone else for your wrong doing and mistakes. *Anytime you point your finger at someone else, there are three of your own fingers pointing back at you.* We are all losers without God. Accept who you are and turn to God in faith for salvation. Let me also say, “there are no losers with God.” Admit to God you’re a sinner and ask Him to forgive your sins, realizing that Christ paid for them. Decide to rely upon Jesus Christ as your Savior because of all that He did to pay for your sins. Make that decision now!

Being saved is the easiest thing in the world but people make it difficult. It’s so simple to be saved. You are a sinner my friend. Because of your sins, you deserve to go to Hell. But praise be to God, He sent His only begotten Son Jesus, to died on the cross for our sins. Jesus was buried, and He bodily resurrected the third day. This is “the Gospel” as defined by 1st Corinthians 15:1-4.

John 10:9, “I AM THE DOOR: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.” Jesus is the Door into Heaven. There is no other way into Heaven except by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:10-12). If you simply BELIEVE THE GOSPEL, you are saved. Just believe and receive!!! It’s a gift (Romans 6:23).

The important thing is that you BELIEVE THE GOSPEL to be saved! **1st Corinthians 1:21, “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”** There are many false teachings being propagated in churches and on religious radio nowadays; such as, to “Invite Jesus into your life,” which is not the Gospel. Also, other unbiblical teachings that are common are “Confessing Christ before men,” or “Asking Jesus into your heart,” or superstitiously “Saying ‘Jesus is Lord’ to be saved,” or “praying a prayer,” et cetera. None of these constitute THE GOSPEL. Millions of people are hellbound, who errantly

think they are going to Heaven, because they attend a church and center their life around the teachings of Christ. Jesus warned in **John 3:3**, “**Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**”

Becoming a Christian is a win-win situation. There are no losers in God’s family, only winners! Please become a child of God now my friend. You don’t even have to “ask” Jesus to save you, because the Lord has already promised to “**SAVE THEM THAT BELIEVE**” (1st Corinthians 1:21). Jesus doesn’t need to forgive sins, because He has already paid the full price for everyone’s sins on the cross. Thus, eternal life is a free gift, paid for by Jesus’ precious blood. But you have to receive it! Forgiveness is a gift that must be received. **The moment you believe, you receive!** The price of our sins has been paid on the cross of Calvary! The gift of eternal life is yours if you want it, with no obligation whatsoever, just receive it by faith.

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Jesus is Precious!

